

Spring 2023: Philosophy 140: Introduction to Chinese Philosophy

Monday and Thursday: 10:20am to 11:40pm
Scott Hall, Room 204, Rutgers University – New Brunswick

Professor Alexander Guerrero

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Office: Department of Philosophy, 106 Somerset, Office 516

Office Hour: Monday, 12pm to 1pm and by appointment

Course Description

This course provides an overview of Chinese Philosophy, introducing the work of seven prominent classical Chinese Philosophers—Kongzi (Confucius), Mozi, Mengzi (Mencius), Laozi/Daodejing, Zhuangzi, Xunzi, and Han Feizi—and then turning to contemporary Chinese political philosophy, focusing on work by Tongdong Bai. No background knowledge of philosophy is assumed or required.

Required Texts

Philip J. Ivanhoe and Bryan Van Norden, [Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy](#) (2nd Edition) (2005)

Bryan Van Norden, [Introduction to Classical Chinese Philosophy](#) (2011)

Method of Assessment

(A) 3 Seven-Step Philosophical Exercises (20% each, 60% total)

-these are ongoing assignments with regular checkpoints throughout the period during which they are assigned

-these are aimed at getting you to understand deeply and to engage critically with philosophical texts

(B) 3 Quizzes (10% each, 30% total)

▪multiple choice, true-false, short answer

(C) In-Class Group and Individual Participation (10% total)

▪Attendance in class is mandatory and required, but not sufficient! You also need to have done the reading in advance of class, to participate in group discussion, and to pay attention to what other members of the class are saying.

▪Based on engagement and effort in argument groups (more on this in class)

Attendance Policy: you are required to attend class in person each day. If you cannot attend class, you must email the professor in advance of the class that you will miss. If you miss class, you will be required to write a 300-word reflection paper on the reading for the day. Details to follow in class.

COVID Policy

You are encouraged to wear a high-quality mask in class, N95 or KN95, and to wear it properly. This is out of respect for those who might be relatively more vulnerable, among other reasons. I am happy to provide you with high quality masks if you do not have access to them. If you are feeling at all unwell, please do not come to class. Better to err on the side of caution.

Learning Outcome Goals for the Course

- (1) to be able to read and understand philosophical views presented in a variety of forms
- (2) to be able to present (in discussion and in writing) views that differ from your own, and to do so in a way that is fair to the proponents of those views
- (3) to acquire the critical skills necessary for evaluating ideas and arguments
- (4) to be able to construct coherent arguments in support of your views
- 5) to be able to write clearly and in an organized manner
- (6) to be able to discuss complex philosophical ideas with others in ways that are respectful to each other and to the material

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

You are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the Rutgers University policies on plagiarism and academic integrity. Penalties for violations of these policies can be severe, including an automatic failing grade for the course and worse. This document provides a comprehensive overview of those policies:

<https://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/pdfs/current.pdf>

Accessibility

I want this class to be a great and educational experience for all of you, and all of you are entitled to equal access to educational opportunities at Rutgers.

Disabled students are encouraged to speak with me if that would be helpful and to avail themselves of the services provided by the Office of Disability Services: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/>

Respect

In the classroom, we respect and refer to people using the names and personal pronouns that they share; we invite and encourage people to share them. Please be respectful of all members of the class at all times. Lively discussion is good; disrespectful or domineering discussion is not. Please help make room for all members of the class to be heard.

Plan for Course and Readings

All readings are from

Philip J. Ivanhoe and Bryan Van Norden, [Readings in Classical Chinese Philosophy](#) (2nd Edition) (RCCP)

Bryan Van Norden, [Introduction to Classical Chinese Philosophy](#) (ICCP)

Tongdong Bai, [Against Political Equality](#)

Day	Topic	Reading
Introduction		
1/19	Introduction	ICCP: The Historical Context, pp. 1-15 ICCP: Appendix A, "How to Read a Text," pp. 223-233
Kongzi		
1/23	Analects, Books 1-4	RCCP: pp. 1-13 ICCP: pp. 18-21
1/26	Analects, Books 5-10	RCCP: pp. 13-30
1/30	Arguments and Logical Structure Interlude	Handout 4
2/2	5 Themes of Confucianism	ICCP: pp. 21-32
2/6	Kongzi and Virtue Ethics	ICCP: pp. 33-47
Mozi		
2/9	Mozi, the first consequentialist? Chapter 16	RCCP: pp. 59-61, pp. 68-76 ICCP: pp. 49-58
2/13	Mozi, the first consequentialist? Chapters 20, 25, 32	RCCP: pp. 78-90, 105-110
2/16	Mozi and good government Chapters 8, 11	RCCP: pp. 61-68 ICCP: pp. 58-60
2/20 7SM #1.1 due	No Class	

Mengzi		
2/23 Quiz #1	Confucianism refined and defended	RCCP: pp 115-137
2/27	Human nature and ethical cultivation	RCCP: pp. 137-157
Laozi / Daodejing		
3/2	Daodejing, Background and Themes	ICCP: pp. 121-135 RCCP: Daodejing chapters 2, 3, 10, 14, 15, 17, 18, 25, 28, 30, 31, 32, 37, 38, 53, 57, 59, 77, 81 (found on pp. 163-203) (these are the chapters referenced in the ICCP reading; please read them along with those pages as you work through them)
3/6	Daodejing (1)	ICCP: pp. 135-139 RCCP: pp. 161-182
3/9 7SM #1.2 Due	Daodejing (2)	RCCP: pp. 183-203
Zhuangzi		
3/20	Zhuangzi: Context, Skepticism, Relativism	ICCP: pp. 141-146 RCCP: Chapter 2 (pp. 213-224)
3/23	Zhuangzi: Context, Skepticism, Relativism (continued)	ICCP: pp. 141-146 RCCP: Chapter 2 (pp. 213-224)
3/27	Zhuangzi: Freedom and Morality	RCCP: Chapter 3 (pp. 224-226), Chapter 17 (pp. 245-247) "Beyond Dust and Grime" by Tao Jiang
3/30 Quiz #2	Zhuangzi: Detachment and Nonaction	RCCP: Chapter 4 (pp. 226-231), Chapter 6 (pp. 235-242), Chapter 20 (pp. 248-249) ICCP: pp. 147-152
Xunzi		
4/3	Xunzi's Confucian Naturalism	ICCP: pp. 163-168 RCCP: pp. 255-267
4/6	No class	no reading
4/7	7SM #2.1 Due	please submit online by 8pm

4/17	Xunzi's Ethical Cultivation	ICCP: pp. 178-180 RCCP: Xunzi, Chapters 19 (pp. 274-284), 21 (pp. 286-292), and 23 (pp. 298-306)
Han Feizi		
4/20	Power and Good Government	ICCP: pp. 185-199 RCCP: Han Feizi, Chapters 5, 6, 7, 12, 43
Contemporary Chinese Philosophy		
4/24	Tongdong Bai, <u>Against Political Equality: The Confucian Case</u>	pp. 19-31, Chapter 2 (pp. 32-51)
4/27	Tongdong Bai, <u>Against Political Equality: The Confucian Case</u>	Chapters 3 and 4 (pp. 52-109)
5/1 Quiz #3	Tongdong Bai, <u>Against Political Equality: The Confucian Case</u>	Chapter 3 and 4 (pp. 52-109)
5/8 A#3 Due		